How Swede It Is

The Wave
Published – October 25, 2013

Arverne East Winner Named

It wasn't easy. A jury spent 10 hours the night before the big announcement was due. They couldn't decide on a winner of the Far Roc Design Competition. Finally, Dolores Orr, Chair of Community Board 14 and one of the jury members herself, helped the jury make the tough call when she announced that she had full intentions of getting on the last ferry from the City to Rockaway.

With that, the jury selected White Arkitekter, based in Stockholm, Sweden, as the winner. The firm was selected as the winner of the two-phase "For a Resilient Rockaway" (FAR ROC) design competition at the Arverne East site in the Rockaways. The FAR ROC jury chose the winner from among four finalists selected from a pool of 117 submissions from more than 20 countries.

Launched in April, the FAR ROC competition sought ideas for developing an 80+ acre City-owned site called Arverne East into a mixed-use, mixed-income, sustainable and storm-resilient community that will meet the new physical and regulatory challenges of waterfront development while maintaining the balance between innovation and affordability.
The primary developers L+M and the Bluestone Organization have had control over the large oceanfront parcel for years. Its initial development plans fell through when the financial crisis took hold.

The developers now say there's a "new momentum" in Rockaway and want to get started. Ron Moelis of L+M, who is spearheading a cleanup and turnaround of Ocean Village at Beach 59th Street said he "hopes" to break ground in 2014. Whether White Arkitekter is there for the actual development is another matter. The winning selection is non-binding. The developers awarded the winners $30,000 but can elect to go in another direction. Moelis, and others, said the White Arkitekter presentation, which ran 44 pages, was impressive and they expected to continue working with the firm.

Details of the winning selection can be found at FarRoc.com and www.white.se/en/